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卷首语 From the Editors' Desk

The Authorities for a *jingdian* (Classic) to become a *jing* (Canon) in the Chinese Context^{〔1〕}

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Abstract: The Bible has been translated as *Shengjing* (the Holy Canon) in Chinese, but during recent years some Confucian scholars have questioned the reasonability of classifying the Bible as “Holy” and “canon”. Thus, it is crucial to define what a *jing* (canon) is and why a *jing* (canon) holds authority. After an analysis on the concepts of Canons and the study of Canons in Chinese and Western Contexts, the present author draws a contrast between the Confucian Canons in the light of Western studies and the Western Canons in the light of Confucianism. He will come to the conclusion that the key to understanding these two traditions and their studies of Canons lies in the authority that elevates a classic into a Canon. It is to say, where does the authority come from? Is it a divine revelation from the top-down or a human exploration from the bottom-up? This determines whether the authority of a Canon is metaphysically absolute, eternal and unchangeable. If not, is it physically relative, temporal, and changeable instead? This is an essential issue for emphasizing the importance of reading Confucian Canons today and for promoting Confucianism in the West. Its answer will either defend or challenge to its legality.

Key Words: Canon; the study of Canons; the Western Studies; Confucianism; Authority

By 2019, the Chinese Union Version of the Bible (*heheben*) has existed for 100 years. However, more and more people in China are now starting to emphasize the importance of reading the Confucian classics again. Based on such a background, the present author aims to explore what kind of authority can raise a *jingdian* (classic) into a *jing* (canon) in Chinese context. Such an exploration has been closely related with the analysis of two concepts of *jing* (canon) and the studies of *jing* (canons).

1 *Jing* (Canons) in Chinese context

In the Chinese context, what constitutes a *jing* (canon)? What kind of relationship does it have with the classics, Scriptures and Religious Canons? If we define “whether it holds authority” as the

〔1〕 Concerning the similar topic, please refer to Paulos Huang and Yeo, K. K. 2019: “Confucian Classics and the Bible”, in *Oxford Handbook of the Bible in China* (Oxford University Press). 黄保罗 Paulos Huang 2019: “汉语语境里的‘经’与‘经学’ Hanyu yujing li de jing yu jingxue” 【Classics and the Study of Classics in Chinese Context】, 载《关东学刊》 *Guandong xuekan* 【The Journal of Guandong】, 第2期 vol. 2, 53-69.

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criterion, we may divide them into divine canons or scriptures (which hold absolute authority) and humanistic classics (which do not hold absolute authority but have relative authority). In this section, the present author will analyze how the Confucian canons have become canons, what their criteria were, and how they lost their status as canons later during Chinese history.

1. 1A Confucian canons and the history of how classics have become canons

In Confucian tradition, there have been the following cannons.

The Six Canons	<i>Shijing</i> (Poems), <i>Shujing</i> (The Documents), <i>Liji</i> (The Rites), <i>Yijing</i> (The Book of Changes), <i>Yuejing</i> (The Canon of Music), <i>Chunqiu</i> (Spring and Autumn)	221 BC
The Five Canons	<i>Shijing</i> (Poems), <i>Shujing</i> (The Documents), <i>Liji</i> (The Rites), <i>Yijing</i> (The Book of Changes), <i>Chunqiu</i> (Spring and Autumn)	221 BC, existed
The Seven Canons	<i>Shijing</i> (Poems), <i>Shujing</i> (The Documents), <i>Liji</i> (The Rites), <i>Yijing</i> (The Book of Changes), <i>Chunqiu</i> (Spring and Autumn), <i>Lunyu</i> (The Annalects), <i>Xiaojing</i> (The Canon of Filial Piety)	The East Han Dynasty
The Nine Canons	<i>Shijing</i> (Poems), <i>Shujing</i> (The Documents), <i>Liji</i> (Zhouli, Liyi, Liji), <i>Yijing</i> (The Book of Changes), <i>Chunqiu</i> (Spring and Autumn), <i>Chunqiu</i> (Gongyang, Guliang, Zuozhuan)	Tang Dynasty
The Twelve Canons	<i>Shijing</i> (Poems), <i>Shujing</i> (The Documents), <i>Liji</i> (Zhouli, Liyi, Liji), <i>Yijing</i> (The Book of Changes), <i>Chunqiu</i> (Spring and Autumn), <i>Chunqiu</i> (Gongyang, Guliang, Zuozhuan), <i>Lunyu</i> (The Annalects), <i>Xiaojing</i> (The Canon of Filial Piety), <i>Erya</i>	The Late Tang Dynasty
The Thirteen Canons	<i>Shijing</i> (Poems), <i>Shujing</i> (The Documents), <i>Liji</i> (Zhouli, Liyi, Liji), <i>Yijing</i> (The Book of Changes), <i>Chunqiu</i> (Spring and Autumn), <i>Chunqiu</i> (Gongyang, Guliang, Zuozhuan), <i>Lunyu</i> (The Annalects), <i>Xiaojing</i> (The Canon of Filial Piety), <i>Erya</i> , <i>Mengzi</i> (The Mencius)	The South Song Dynasty
The Four Books	<i>Lunyu</i> (The Annalects), <i>Daxue</i> (The Great Learning), <i>Zhongyong</i> (The Mean), <i>Mengzi</i> (The Mencius)	The South Song Dynasty

There are two important requirements for all of the above Confucian canons to be classified as canon: 1) Their royal political influence. 2) Confirmation that these texts have reflected, indicated or represented the Heavenly Way, i. e. , the Truth. However, while it has not been clearly explained in Confucian tradition how a text has fulfilled the aforementioned criteria, at least they are not classified as divine revelations from the top-down. At most, they are the reflections of great people such as sages, who have observed, studied and found the relative truths, but not the absolute truth.

In addition to the Confucian Canons, Buddhist canons have also played important roles in Chinese Daoism.

1. 1B *Jing* (Canons) have lost their status of being *jing* (canons) and have become common *jingdian* (classics); The End of the Imperial Civil Examination System and that of the Discipline of *dujing* (Reading Canons)

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, facing the challenges of globalization and modernization coming from the West, the Qing imperial family realized that they could not

survive only through the Confucian canons. This prompted them to abolish the dominant status of Confucian canons as the criteria for ruling and education, and they began investing in the modern education system focused on science, technology, vocation training, etc. instead. Therefore, Confucian canons were transformed into common humanistic and referential classics.^[3] In August 1905, The Queen Cixi (慈禧太后) and the Emperor Guangxu (光绪皇帝) approved the appeal of ministers represented by Yuan Shikuai (袁世凯) and others to abolish the imperial civil examination system from 1906 onwards, and to start a new modern education and examination system of math, physics, chemistry, history, geography, zoology, foreign languages, etc.^[4] In January 19th, 1912, the Education Minister of Republic of the China at the time, Cai Yuanpei (蔡元培), issued *The Temporary Methods of General Education* (*Putong jiaoyu zanshi banfa*《普通教育暂行办法》), according to which Confucian canons would not be studied as canons anymore in any primary, middle and high schools. Although some of Confucian texts are still studied in schools, they are considered only as common classics rather than canons with authority.^[5] Therefore, Confucian canons had lost their status as canons, mainly because these texts themselves lacked both efficiency and authority.

II The studies of *jing* (the canons) in the Chinese context

2.1A The study of the canons in the era when the canons were worshipped

The study of canons was a practice of studying Confucian canons in China. While the practice had a long history, ‘the study of canons’ (*jingxue*) wasn’t used to refer to an academic discipline until the late Qing dynasty when scholar Pi Xirui (皮锡瑞) published his books *A general study of the canons* (*Jingxue tonglun*《经学通论》)^[6], *A history of the study of the canon* (*Jingxue lishi*《经学历史》)^[7] and Liu Shipai (刘师培) published his book *A textbook of study of the canons* (*Jingxue jiaokeshu*《经学教科书》).^[8]

“Canon” is called *jing* (经) in Chinese meaning “normal”, “criterion” and “standard”. Those texts, which have been accepted as canons, have authority and are considered as the standard of thinking, behaving, ruling and managing, etc. The study of canons should have already been started as early as canons existed.

The system of the Six Canons was established because of Confucius’s and his disciples’ contributions through editing, transmission and education.

[3] It is said that Guangxu Emperor of Qing Dynasty gave a speech in Sep. 21st, 1891 in the establishing ceremony of Jingshi daxuetang 京师大学堂 (The former Peking University), and he emphasized the reason to end the imperial civil examination system and to abolish the dominant status of Confucian canons as the criteria of ruling and education, and expressed the necessity of modern education of science, technology, vocation training, etc.

[4] Li Tiangang (李天纲): “Year 1905: The vanishing of the imperial civil education system” (1905—Kejuzhi de huanmie 1905 年——科举制的幻灭), <http://www.aisixiang.com/http://www.aisixiang.com/data/7177.html>

[5] Huang Yusheng (黄裕生) 2018: “Please do not let the return after one hundred years as reviving the ancient: A reflection on return of Confucian canons into civil education” (Mo shi bainian huigui cheng fugu—Guanyu rujia jingdian chonggui guomin jiaoyu de sikao 莫使百年回归成复古——关于儒家经典重归国民教育的思考), in *South Weekend* (*Nanfang zhounuo*《南方周末》) March 8th, 2018.

[6] Pi Xirui (皮锡瑞) 1954: *A general study on the canons* (*Jingxue tonglun*《经学通论》). (Beijing 北京: Zhonghua shuju 中华书局.)

[7] Pi Xirui (皮锡瑞) 1989: *A history of the study of the canons* (*Jingxue lishi*《经学历史》). (Beijing 北京: Zhonghua shuju 中华书局.)

[8] Liu Shipai (刘师培) 1990: *A textbook of the study of the canons* (*Jingxue jiaokeshu*《经学教科书》). (Shanghai shudian 上海书店.)

The main characteristic of traditional Confucian canons is an indicated authority for them, and such an authority was granted to them from Confucius.^[9]

What is the authority of Confucian canons? Are they absolute and divine, or are they only relative and humanistically secular? If a text is accepted as a canon that holds authority, it should be absolute and divine. Otherwise it cannot be considered as a canon with absolute authority. If a canon's authority can change in accordance to time and place rather than being absolutely divine, there lies the danger for it to lose its authority.

In the orthodox Confucian tradition, Canons' authority does not come from divine revelation or absoluteness but comes from humanistic and secular authority. Because humanistic and secular authority is influenced by time and place, it is not reliable and will possibly change constantly. Therefore if Confucian canons keep their authority, it is necessary to find evidence from chen speeches, *wei* texts (*chenyan weishu* 谶言纬书), photos from Luo river, texts from Yellow River (*Luotu heshu* 洛图河书) and the legend of Cang Jie creating Chinese characters (*Cang Jie zaozi* 仓颉造字). Although traditional and orthodox Confucianism do not prove the authority of their canons through this evidence, the present author thinks that without this evidence, Confucian canons cannot hold absolute and divine authority, but only have relative, humanistic and secular authority.

Chenwei (谶纬) is a divination combined with mystical Confucian beliefs (prevalent during the eastern Han dynasty 东汉, 25-220).^[10] *Chen* is the text of prophecy, foreboding and augury by shaman, and sometimes it is combined with certain divine photos and mystic Confucian beliefs. And *Wei* is a kind of text of interpreting Confucian canons from the viewpoint of theology. They are collections from ancient times rather than one sole author's speech or text. Such texts had very close relationships with the official ideology of the East Han Dynasty, the authority of East Han Guangwu Emperor Liu Xiu (光武帝刘秀) and their ceremony system.^[11]

Photos from the Yellow River and the texts from the Luo River (*Hetu luoshu* 河图洛书) were a legend that, in the West Han Dynasty, nine chapters of Photos were revealed from the Yellow River and six chapters of Books were revealed from the Luo River, and they were transmitted from Emperor Huang (Huangdi 黄帝) to the King Wen of Zhou (Zhou Wenwang 周文王). In addition, there were 30 chapters from Confucius and 36 chapters of Jingwei. There were 81 chapters in total. According to *Yijing Xici* (《易·系辞上》) a dragon horse (longma 龙马) appeared from the Yellow River with many photos on his back, a divine tortoise (shengui 神龟) appeared from the Luo River with many chapters of books on his back, the sage Fuxi (伏羲) created the Eight Trigrams (bagua 八卦), and King Wen of Zhou made 64 Hexagrams (64 yao 爻) by interpreting texts based on these

[9] Li Xueqin (李学勤) 2005: "On the relationship between the studies on canons and documents" (Tan jingxue yu wenxianxue de guanxi 谈经学与文献学的关系), *The journal of He'nan normal university (The edition of philosophy and social sciences)* (Henan shifan daxue xuebao; Zhesheban《河南师范大学学报: 哲社版》), Vol. 2, 2005.

[10] *Suishu. Jingjizhi* (《隋书 经籍志》) reads: "孔子既叙六经, 以明天人之道, 知后世不能稽同其意, 故别立纬与谶, 以遗来世".

[11] Ding Dian (丁点), Yang Hongquan (杨洪权) 1993: *The mystic prophecy: A study on Chinese ancient chen texts (Shenmi de yuyan; Zhongguo gudai chenyan yanjiu《神秘的预言——中国古代谶言研究》)* (Taiyuan 太原: Shanxi renmin chubanshe 山西人民出版社). *Sikuquanshu zongmu tiyao* (《四库全书总目提要》) reads: "盖秦汉以来, 去圣日远, 儒者推阐论说, 各自成书, 与经原不相比附; 其他私相撰述, 渐杂以术数之言, 既不知作者为谁, 因附会以神其说; 遂与谶合二为一。"

Yellow River and the books from the Luo River and the legends of Cang Jie creating Chinese characters are carefully studied, perhaps the absolute divine authority of Confucian canons can be warranted. Otherwise, the authority of Confucian canons can only be relative, humanistic and secular, and it will change in accordance with the contexts of time and place.

2.1B The studies of the Confucian canons in the era when they are worshipped

In the era when Confucian canons were worshipped, the studies of them were mainly in the following forms.

“*Zhu* 注” (Note) is the explanation of the canon texts themselves, especially to explain certain individual terms or concepts. For example, *Mengzi zhu*《孟子注》(*The Note to the Mencius*) and *Shiji sanjia zhu*《史记三家注》(*Three Notes on the Historical Record*).

“*Shu* 疏” (commentary) is a further commentary to the explanation of the canon text, since not only are canon texts difficult to understand, but so are their explanations. Thus, a further commentary is written for the explanation.

“*Jian* 笺” (annotation) is a reflection to the explanation, similar to a commentary.

“*Zhuan* 传” (commentaries on classics) is similar to the further commentary (*shu* 疏) but focusing mainly on the meaning of the canon text. This term was mainly used in the Han dynasty, and later it was changed into *shu* 疏.

“*Zhengyi* 正义” (Orthodox meaning) was a special form of note or commentary on the Confucian canons in the Tang Dynasty, when the royal government offered standard answers to the Imperial Examination. Of these, only *Wujing zhengyi*《五经正义》(*The Orthodox Meaning of the Five Canons*) has ever existed.

“*Jijie* 集解” (The Collection of Interpretations) is a collection of all kinds of interpretations of the Confucian canons, e. g., *Lunyu jijie*《论语集解》(*The collection of all kinds of interpretation of the Annalects*), *Xunzi jijie*《荀子集解》(*The collection of all kinds of interpretations of the Xunzi*), *Hanfei zi jijie*《韩非子集解》(*The collection of all kinds of interpretations of the Hanfei zi*). In addition, there is a similar book called *Sishu jizhu*《四书集注》(*The collection of all kinds of notes of the Four Books*).

2.2 The Study of the Confucian Canons in the Modern Society

In the modern Chinese society since the end of 19th century, the Confucian canons have lost their status as Canons, scholars do not study them as absolute divine Canons anymore, but as common, traditional, humanistic secular classics. These kinds of studies have mainly two forms.

2.2A The study of history of canons in the modern society

Although Confucian canons do not have the status of being as absolute divine standard and criteria of thinking and behaving any more in the modern China, but these texts themselves are still worthy of being studied, from the viewpoint of the history of thoughts, these classics can be studied especially from three aspects. First, the conflicts and struggles among different classes concerning the canons in various historical and geographical contexts. Second, how various historical thoughts of canons have been serving for different classes. Third, how the thoughts of canons have been formed

as a rule in various historical stages. ^[14]

2.2B The studies of documentaries in the modern society

All kinds of notes, commentaries, annotations and other studies on the Confucian canons, are studies of the Confucian canons from the viewpoint of the studies of documentaries. Although these Canons have now lost their status as absolute divine canons in the light of modern sciences, they can still be studied as humanistic secular classics, documents and texts. The presuppositions of accepting these Confucian texts as divine canons are that of considering these texts as common texts, but the texts themselves can still be studied similarly. ^[15]

The studies of documentaries in the modern society have mainly the following forms. 1) *Yuwen xue* 语文学 (Philology) is an academic discipline on the language and literary characteristics of historical documents, and it is closely related with Chinese traditional little studies (*xiaoxue* 小学) such as text, phonology, exegesis, textual research, rhetorics and semantics. 2) *Mulu xue* 目录学 (Bibliography / Bibliology) is the studies of documentaries, editions, versions, bibliographies, index, etc. 3) *Xinxi jilu xue* 信息记录学 (Documentation Science) is the studies of recording and reading of information, etc.

III *Jing* (Canons) and the history and criteria of its establishment in the Western (humanistic and theological) contexts

There are two sub-traditions in the Western studies: humanistic classics and theological canons or scriptures.

3.1A The humanistic classics of the humanities studies

Are open and changeable, and their amount is not fixed. They are mainly humanistic and philosophical reflections, such as Greek and other Western philosophical classics, historical cultural documents, literature fictions by Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Home and William Shakespeare, etc. Such classics only have relative authority but do not hold absolute authorities.

3.1B Theological scriptures and canons

As far as the tradition of Western studies is concerned, the theological or religious scriptures are usually also referred to as Canons, which are mainly the Jewish Bible, the Christian Bible (including the Old and the New Testaments) and the Islamic Coran. ^[16] They are not open and their amounts are fixed. They are holy and divine, and hold absolute authority.

If we focus on the studies of studies of the Christian theological scriptures, there are mainly

[14] Zhou Yutong (周予同) 2014: “‘经’、‘经学’、经学史 *Jing, jingxue, jingxueshi*” (Canons, the studies of canons, and the history of canons study), 见冯天瑜 Feng Tianyu、杨华 Yang Hua 选编 2014:《中国文化史经典精读》*Zhongguo wenhua shi jingdian jingdu* (The careful readings of Chinese Cultural Historical Classics). (北京 Beijing: 高等教育出版社 Gao Deng jiaoyu chubanshe (The High Education Press). 姜广辉 Jiang Guanghui 主编 2003:《中国经学思想史》*Zhongguo jingxue sixiangshi* (The history of Chinese canons study). (北京 Beijing: 中国社会科学出版社 Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe (China Social Sciences Press).

[15] Li Xueqin (李学勤) 2005: “On the relationship between the studies on canons and documents” (Tan jingxue yu wenxianxue de guanxi 谈经学与文献学的关系), *The journal of Henan normal university (The edition of philosophy and social sciences)* (《河南师范大学学报: 哲社版》), Vol. 2, 2005.

[16] Please refer to Wikipedia.

three perspectives: 1) To interpret the Christian Bible as Revealed Verbal “Words of God”. 2) To interpret the Christian Bible as “words about God”. 3) To interpret the Christian Bible as “a discourse between God and human beings”.

Canon, Scripture, Bible and *jing*: The term “Canon” was believed to have been first used by the Church Father Origen (185 – 254) to refer to “the official standard texts of the Church with authority”. The term “Scripture” referred originally to “a book”, and the term “Bible” was used in its place much later. Sometimes “Scripture” and “Bible” can be used as synonyms, but nowadays the term “Bible” is used much more than “Scripture”. In addition, the term “Testaments” is used often as well and it includes both the “New Testaments” (NT) and “the Old Testaments” (OT). In Chinese, the term “*jing*” has been used to translate the Bible into Chinese, and it is close to the terms “canon” and “scripture”, them meaning “standard and principle”.

The canon of the Hebrew Bible, which is also called as Palestine Canon, includes three parts: The Pentateuch, *i. e.*, *Torah* (the Law), *Nebi'im* (the Prophets), and *Ketubim* (the Writings). The Apocryphas are those prophecies, which have not been included within the Hebrew Bible. In the Synod of Jamnia of AD 70, the Hebrew Bible was officially established as consisting of 24 books, which is similar to but not the same as the Christian Canon.

The official canons were written, collected and accepted as having authority in a long historic process.

1) Writing dates: Most of the Old Testaments, also called the Hebrew Bible, were written between the 8th and the 6th centuries BC, some of them were written or revised between the 5th and the 2nd centuries BC, and all of them were finished in the Hellenistic Period of the 2nd and 1st centuries BC. The New Testaments were written between years AD 50 – 100. Between AD 100 and 200 most of the NT was circulated in the early church. Between AD 200 and 300 editions, versions and authorities of the NT were verified by the early Church, and between AD 300 and 400 the amount of the NT books were verified by many Church Councils.

2) The compiling dates and the dates of gaining official authority: The Hebrew Bible was collected and compiled by about AD 70. For the Protestant Church, the Bible with 66 books (including 39 books of the Old Testaments and 27 books of the New Testaments) was established and given official authority in the 16th century when the Religious Reformation happened. For the Roman Catholic Church, the Bible with 73 books (including 66 books and 7 *Apocryphas*) gained official authority between years 1545 and 1563 when the Trent Council was called. For the Orthodox Church, the Bible with 80 or 81 books (including 73 books and 14 or 15 *Apocryphas*) gained official authority in the Jerusalem Council of 1672. However, the Ethiopian Orthodox Bible has more *Apocryphas* than the East Orthodox Bible does.

3) The concepts of Prophecy and Covenant or Testament have played important roles in the formation process of the Hebrew Bible or the Old Testament. When a NT book was under consideration to be accepted into the NT's canon, usually three standards were followed: A) Apostolicity, *i. e.*, whether a certain book was written by or related to an apostle of Jesus Christ. B) Orthodoxy, *i. e.*, whether a certain book is in accordance with the doctrine of the church's Gospel about Jesus Christ, the Holy Son of Trinitarian God, as a full human without sin and as God. C) Catholicity, *i. e.*, whether a certain book had already been accepted by the church before the list of canons was established.

In Church history, at first there was no compiled list of inspired books before the establishment of Christian faith's doctrine. Instead, the doctrine of faith came first before the books and texts were accepted into the canon. According to the doctrine of Church faith, the authority of the Bible did not come from certain traditions, authoritative people, nor came from humanistic reasonable logics or pragmatism. The authority of the Bible comes from the divine revelation of God to certain prophets and apostles, who had written the Biblical texts with the inspiration of Holy Spirit. Therefore, the Bible is eternal and absolutely divine, rather than temporal and relative humanistic.

Some *Apocryphas*, also referring to as Deuterocanonical books, were accepted by the Roman Catholic Church and Orthodox Church, but have not been accepted by the Protestant Church as official canons.

There are also many texts related to the Bible and Christian spirituality called *Pseudepigrapha*, which means false writings, and they were mainly written between 200 BC and AD 200. Christian Church does not accept them as part of canon, but scholars and common people are very interested in them as objects of academic studies or the legends. For example, 1 *Enoch*, *Odes of Solomon*, etc. They do not have the authorities the Bible holds as canon.

The process of the transmission of the Bible: The original manuscripts of the OT (in Hebrew and Aram languages) and NT (in Greek language) have disappeared and do not exist anymore. Today, there are only copies of the original manuscripts or the remains of their earlier versions. The earliest authoritative edition of the OT was discovered in 1947, the Dead Sea Scroll, which dated to 300 BC—AD 100. The earliest editions of the NT is the Codex Vaticanus B, which dated from AD 400, the Chester Beatty Papyrus II (P46) (80—100 AD) and the Codex Sinaiticus (AD 350) which contain the whole Bible.

The process of the translations of the Bible: A) The earlier translated version of the OT was the Septuagint LXX, which was translated from Hebrew into Greek in around 200 BC by Ptolemy II (285—246 BC). B) The Aram translated version of the OT was Targum (AD 150). C) The Latin translated version of the entire Bible was Vulgata by Church Father Jerome (Latin: Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus; Greek: Ἐὐσέβιος Σωφρόνιος Ἱερώνυμος; c. 27 March 347–30 September 420). The contents list and the order of English and Chinese translating versions of the OT today we usually have are basically based on that of the Vulgate, and the translation of OT is basically based on Masoretic Hebrew Bible (dating from around AD 800). The newest translations have already referred to the *Dead Sea Scroll* (AD 200). D) The English translation of the Bible was started by John Wycliff (1330—1384) from the Vulgate version in the 14th century (around 1384). In 1526 William Tyndale (1494—1526) translated again the NT from the original Greek version into English. Since 1611 the King James Version (KJV) started to gain popularity, and later the New King James Version (NKJV, 1990) was revised. Of course, there appeared many other English versions later. E) The Printed Bible in 1450 by the German Gutenberg (1400—1468) printing, which made it possible for the Bible to be printed more quickly and easily, although the Bible did not become popular until the 18th and 19th centuries. F) The German version of the Martin Luther Bible was published in 1522 (NT) and 1534 (OT). Luther has been largely and strongly influenced the Religious Reformation and the translations of the Bible into many other languages. G) The Chinese translations of the Bible were most likely started as early as in the 7th century when the Nestorianism came into the Tang dynasty of China through Syria, but few manuscripts of the biblical translations remain today. In addition to some partial manuscripts of the Roman Catholic translations, the earliest Chinese version of the whole Bible was done by the Britain Baptist

missionary John Marshman in 1822, and it was called *Xin Jiu yue quanshu*《新旧约全书》(The Whole Book of the Old and New Testaments). Through a process of development, in 1919 a *Guanhua hehe yiben*《官话和合译本》(Chinese Union Version/Mandarin Union Version) was published as the result of an ecumenical cooperation, and this version has been becoming so popular and dominant in the Chinese church that it took until 1983 and 2010 to have some reversion ben done to revise this translated version. Other Chinese translated versions were also done among Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant churches in China. Almost all of them have translated the Bible with the Chinese term "Shengjing", i. e. , the Holy Canon.

IV The studies of the canons in the light of the Western Studies

4.1 Exegetics is an academic discipline of studying texts, especially religious texts through interpreting them to find their meaning(the Greek term ἐξ ἡγήσεις / ἐξηγεῖσθαι refers to "to lead out"). This is a critics on texts. It does not only study the history and the source of the texts, but also studies the author of the texts, the historical and cultural background of texts and authors, and the literary styles, grammar and syntax of the texts. There are many the different schools of exegetics in the Biblical studies such as the Form critics, Historical critics, High and Low critics, etc.

4.2 The hermeneutics is the theory and methodology of interpretation of especially the Biblical texts, Wisdom Books and philosophical texts. Hermeneutics later developed into an independent academic discipline as a sub-discipline of philosophy. Therefore modern hermeneutics includes verbal and non-verbal communication, semantic studies and the study of presuppositions. Now, the method of hermeneutics has been popularly used in humanities sciences, especially in law, history and theology. The term "text" does not refer only to the religious texts themselves and literary or verbal materials. It also refers to events, customs, phenomena, and other objects which are to be studied in literature, arts and sociology. Ideology critics, reader critics, feminism and others are all the different schools of hermeneutics.

Sometimes exegetics can be used as a synonym to hermeneutics, but as far as their essences are concerned, exegetics studies mainly textual words, literary, grammatical and semantic features, i. e. what the original text meant in their original context. On the other hand, hermeneutics studies literary, verbal and non-verbal communications and their significances to the contemporary readers.

V *Jing* (Canons) and *jingxue* (the studies of the canons) in the contrast between Confucian and the Western Studies

The Western canons (i. e. , *jing*) in the light of Confucian studies; In Confucian studies, *jing* (canon) has not gained its authority from divine and absolute truth, but from humanistic imperial power, ethical morality, sages' reflection and so on. Therefore in the light of the Confucian studies, the Western *jing* (canon) can be understood in two senses: On the one hand, most Confucian scholars reject the metaphysical, absolute and eternal authorities of the Western religious/theological *jing* (canon), i. e. , that of the Bible, since the official Confucianism does not accept the divine revelation of *chenwei*, *Hetu Luoshu* (the photos from the Yellow River and the books from the Luo River), the legend of Cang Jie creating Chinese

characters, and the worship of Heavenly God in the pre-Qin period. On the other hand, the relative, temporary and humanistic authorities of the Western *jingdian* (classics) can be accepted by most Confucian scholars. Thus, most Confucians cannot accept Bible holding absolute, divine and eternal authorities, but consider it as having only relative philosophical, literal, historical, cultural and other authorities. Therefore, in recent years, some radical nationalist Confucian scholars rejected the Chinese translation of Christmas as *shengdanjie* 圣诞节 (The Holy Birthday) but tried to translate it as *Yedanjie* 耶诞节 (the birthday of Jesus), rejected to translate the Bible as *Shengjing* 《圣经》 (The Holy Canons) but insisted on translating it as *Jijing* 《基经》 (the Canons of Christianity).^[17] In the light of most Confucians, the Bible is not a canon, but only a classic. If it is called as a canon, it will only be a humanistic and secular canon rather than a divine canon.

The Confucian *jing* (canons) in the light of the Western studies: On the one hand, the Confucian *jing* (canons) are considered only as humanistic and relative classics in the light of the Western studies, since for Western humanistic scholars all classics are humanistic and relative, and for the Western theological scholars only divine revelation is absolute and eternal. Therefore, Confucian *jing* (canons) have no divine and absolute but only humanistic and relative authorities. For example, in the 18th century when the Enlightenment Movement was popular, some Western humanistic scholars appreciated Confucianism and its *jing* (canons) to such an extent that they contradicted themselves and seemed to have had divine and absolute authorities.

On the other hand, in the light of the Western Christian theological studies, the Bible can be understood in two levels. First, the Bible is the divine revelation of God to human beings from the top-down and it is eternal, absolute and divine. The Bible mainly focuses on the relationship between God and human beings, which is indicated through concepts like creation, providence, salvation/soteriology, divination, the study of God, Christology and the study of Holy Spirit. In this sense, the Confucian canons do not have such authorities. Second, the Bible is also the seeking, prayer and human beings' love to God, and it is the humanistic reflection on God from the bottom-up. It deals mainly with the relationship between human beings and the world, other people and themselves. In this sense, the Bible contains also humanistic, temporal, relative and secular words; and the Bible has many important and meaningful values, which can be referred to and accepted by Christian and other cultures.

In summary, we may find that the contrast between Western and Confucian *jing* (canons) and the *jingxue* (the studies of the canons), *sheng* (divine) and *shengren* (sages) are main concepts. The main questions are the following ones: Are the humanistic classics divine or not? Is the Bible divine? Is Confucius the sage? Is Mencius the second-sage?

According to Christian claims and believes the Bible is the word of God, and it is the absolute, divine and eternal Truth, and it has gained its authority from the top-down. This is because it is the divine revelation of God to human beings rather than a logical or natural theological reflection of human beings from the bottom-up.

[17] 王达三 Wang Dasan 2008: "Guanyu ba Shengdianjie zhengming wei Yedanjie de sikao he jianyi 关于把‘圣诞节’正名为‘耶诞节’的思考和建议"(On the reflection and suggestion to change the Holy Birthday, i. e. Christmas into the name as the Birthday of Jesus), <http://www.aisixiang.com/data/23247.html> (quotation in 2019 June 3rd). 林安梧 Lin Anwu 2018: "Shengdanjie yinggai jiao Yedanjie, Rujiao shi juexing de zongjiao '圣诞节'应该叫'耶诞节', 儒教是觉性的宗教"(Christmas should be called "the Birthday of Jesus", Confucian Religion is a Religion of Enlightenment), <https://www.rujiazg.com/article/15532> (quotation in 2019 June 3rd)

We may reflect together with Confucians, whether can Confucians accept the Bible as the divine and absolute revelation of God to human beings as the Christians do? If not, what are the reasons for Confucians to prove their arguments? A) Is it because only their own Confucian *jing* (canons) are divine and absolute revelation of the Heavenly Way, Truth or God? Or B) Have they proven that the Bible is not reliable from the bottom-up based on logical facts? Or do Confucians have a third approach to warrant their arguments?

VI The core question for Confucianism to be promoted in the West is this: Where have the Confucian *jing* (canons) gained their authorities from?

In contemporary China, the government encourages people to read the Confucian classics and to promote them in foreign countries. As far as the Western context of Europe and North America is concerned, we need to consider reasons for such a promotion. On the one hand, we may reflect how and why we should read the Confucian classics. Are they *jing* (canons) or *jingdian* (humanistic classics)? On the other hand, we should understand how a canon (*jing*) can earn its status as a canon. On the physical level, a classic becomes a canon through humanistic, sociological, ethical, political or pragmatic reasons, and all of them are changeable and relative depending on the contexts of time and place. On the metaphysical level, a classic becomes a canon because it was made through divine revelation, which is eternal and unchangeable.

Through the establishment of Confucius Institute all around the world Chinese government has been starting a process of promoting Chinese value and way of thinking to foreigners, what we need to reflect is the criteria, authorities, reasons and purposes behind them.^[18]

VII A reflection of the Bible and the Confucian *jing* (canons)

Who are their authors? Are they finite human beings or the infinite God, Heaven and Truth?

What are the essences of the Bible and the Confucian *jing* (canons)? Are they the words of God or those of human beings?

What are their characteristics? Are they divine, absolute and eternal, or are they humanistic, relative and changeable?

What are their contents? A) Do they mainly deal with the relationship between God and human beings? Do they mainly deal with creation, the original sin, salvation, eternal life, or respecting ghosts and gods but also keeping distance from them? B) Do they mainly deal with the relationship between human beings and the world? I. e., becoming righteous and good through union with Christ by faith, or do people self-cultivate morally through their own attempts so as to become sages in a family, a society, a state or under the sky?

[18] 黄裕生 Huang Yusheng 2018: "Moshi bainian huigui cheng fugu 莫使百年回归成复古——Guanyu rujia jingdian chonggui guomin jiaoyu de sikao 关于儒家经典重归国民教育的思考" (Do not let the return of the one hundred years attempt to become a revival of the ancient: A reflection of the returning of Confucian classics into the national education), in 《Nanfang zhoumo 南方周末》(The South Weekend), March 8th, 2018.

How have their readers interpreted them? Do they worship and believe in them as absolute truth or treat them with a rational, empirical or emotional way?

What are their attitudes to the absolute Truth and a relative idol? Martin Luther interprets idols as false gods, which is relative goodness mistaken as absolute goodness. I. e., a relative, finite human being, a thing or a theory has been worshipped as the absolute and infinite God or Truth. For example, in the Bible, there is no person recognized or worshipped as a perfect human being besides Jesus Christ. However, in the Confucian *jing* (canons) many people such as Yao, Shun, Yu, Tang, Wen, Wu, Duke Zhou and Confucius have been recognized and worshipped as absolute sages, who are perfect.

When the Confucian *jing* (canons) are promoted to the Western context, it is an important task to study the above distinctions. [19]

VIII Summary: *jing* (canons) and *jingdian* (classics) in the light of anthropology [20]

According to the Hebrew tradition of holistic/comprehensive anthropology, a human being is the union of three parts: A) flesh/ dust from the ground (*adam/ aaphaar min haa aadaam*). B) soul /a being/creature living (*hayyaah*). C) spirit /the breath of life (*nismat hayyim*) has been breathed (*wayyipphah*) into his nostrils (*beappaaw*). [21]

According to the Biblical Greek tradition, a person is a union of three parts: A) Spiritual (πνευματικὸς *ōs pneumatikoos*), B) Soul (ψυχικὸς *psychikos*), and C) Flesh (σαρκίνους *sarkinois*) *sooma* (body).

In this volume, we publish the following articles.

In the first column of “Humanities, Theology, and Chinese National Studies” there are two articles. The first one is Professor LIU Qingping’s (Advanced Institute of Social Sciences at Fudan University) “The historic turn of the Confucian destiny from ‘not being used’ to ‘being valued’”, and the second is Professor YU Tao’s (School of Philosophy at Nankai University) “Social Concern in Protestant Spirit: On the Role and Significance of the Reformation in the Formation of Nordic Welfare State System”.

In the second column of “Practical Theology and Sino-Western Views on Church and Society” there are also two articles. The third one is the director of the Institute of World Religions, China Academy of Social Sciences, Professor ZHENG Xiaoyun’s “On the Religious Management Model in Chinese Theravada Buddhism”. And the fourth is Rachel X. Zhu’s (School of Philosophy at Fudan University) “The Impact of Christian Charity on Chinese Society and the Challenges in the future”.

[19] Martin Luther has studied the status of the Bible, please refer to my newest study, 黄保罗 Paulos Huang 2019: “精神人文主义: 马丁·路德与儒家工作坊报告 *Jingshen renwen zhuyi: Mading Lude yu Rujia gongzuofang baogao*” 【A Report on the Workshop of Spiritual Humanism; Martin Luther and Confucianism】，《国学与西学国际学刊》*Guoxue yu xixue guoji xuekan*【International Journal of Sino-Western Studies】第十六期, Vol. 16, pp. 173-234.

[20] Paulos Huang 2019: “A Report on the Workshop of Spiritual Humanism; Martin Luther and Confucians,” *International Journal of Sino-Western Studies* (www.SinoWesternStudies.com) 16 (June 2019), 173-234.

[21] Genesis 2:7 耶和華神 (*Yahweh eloohim* = God) 用地上的 (*min haa aadaam* = of the ground) 尘土 (*aaphaar* = dust) 造 (*wayyise* = for med) 人 (*haa adaamaah* = man), 将生气 (*nismat hayyim* = the breath of life) 吹 (*wayyipphah* = breathed) 在他鼻孔里 (*beappaaw* = into his nostrils), 他就成了 (*wayhi* = became) 有灵的活人 (*lenephes hayyaah* = a being/creature living), 名叫亚当 (*haa aadaam* = Adam).

In the third column of “Chinese and Western Classics and the Bible” there are two articles. The fifth one is David F. Ford’s (Emeritus Regius Professor of Divinity Fellow, Selwyn College, University of Cambridge) “The potential of interreligious dialogue in China and globally; the continuation of Scriptural Reasoning in China”, and Professor Ford is the co-founder of Scriptural Reasoning Society. Following Professor Ford’s article is a response to David Ford on the Scriptural Reasoning by Professor Tuula Sakaranaho (the vice dean of Faculty of Theology at the University of Helsinki). The sixth article is Finnish young talent scholar Dr. Aleksi Kuokkanen’s (Faculty of Theology at University of Helsinki) “Attempts to Understand Scriptural Reasoning”.

In the fourth column of “Church History in the West and in China” there are two articles. The seventh is Professor Claudia von Collani’s (University of Minster, Germany) “The Jesuits Andreas Koffler and Michael Boym at the Court of the Yongli Emperor”. The eighth is LIN Chunjie’s (Director of Department of German Studies, Huazhong University of Technology and Science) “A Historical Investigation of the Relationship between State and Church in Germany in the 20th Century”.

In the fifth column of “Comparative Religious and Cultural Studies” there are two articles. The ninth is ZHANG Hua’s (Beijing Language University) “Anthropological Perspective of Contemporary Theology and the Pluralism of Christianity”, and the tenth is ZHANG Ruiming’s (School of Philosophy at Lanzhou University) “Existential Ti-Theology: Development of Xiong Shili’s Lianglun through Kant and Husserl”.

In the sixth column of “Reviews and Academic Reports” there are three articles. The eleventh is ZHANG Yunyan’s (School of Humanities at Shanghai Communication University) “The left-wing Route of ‘Memory Identity’ and Its Identification Dilemma-Focusing on Max Silverman’s *Plimpsestic Memory-The Holocaust and Colonialism in French and Francophone Fiction and Film*”. The twelfth is WANG Shuai’s (School of Foreign Languages at Peking University) “A Research on the Development of the Russian Orthodox Church in the First Decade after the Enthronement of Patriarch Kirill-Inheritance, Transformation and Challenge”. The thirteenth article is “Juris Entropia”: An Interdisciplinary CPR/A; Context, and Purposeful Action Proposal for Regeneration of Planet Earth’s Naturalist Climate and Environmental Security by David S. Woodroffe and Johannes Alaranta.

中文题目：
汉语语境中“经典”变成“经”的权威根据

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